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174 These facts prove that when the elders of the present generation were young, tattooing, if it was customary, was practiced with some regularity only by the women and originally had an essentially familial character in this region.

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152 A woman bears the pain of the incisions without showing the least sign of suffering, without a complaint or a sigh. She even submits to this custom with some joy, mixed with a bit of pride, knowing that she will be held in higher esteem by the man.

This point, in our opinion, is much more important to the women among primitive peoples than one would generally suppose. It appears to us to be the leitmotiv of the major part of the variations that we observed in the grooming of the native woman.

The anxiety to please, the wishes of the man, these lead the woman to seek constantly the means that would enable her to be tattooed as soon and as often as possible. This natural desire and inner necessity are the reasons why the woman stoically bears all the torture, all the suffering. In primitive life the sexual side naturally is dominant. In this way we can explain, and in a way understand, why tattooing in the beginning was the exclusive appanage of the woman in this region and how she came to decorate the sexual organ and its immediate vicinity in order subsequently to display it; covering nearly all the body with decorations came about, perhaps, simply through coquetry.

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Moral qualities are often involved in the choice of a wife. But strictly speaking, the marriage is not one of reason; the cause of it is more likely to be affection.

The affective and sexual aspects of the question require longer discussion.

Therefore this chapter is divided into two parts:

- I. The emotional life
- II. The sexual life of the Nkundó [24]

Part 1

The Emotional Life of the Nkundó

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[Editor's Note: The Nkundó are capable of real affection. That affection takes varying forms and attains different degrees according to the nature of the persons in question. In successive articles, we will treat:

- I. Affection among relatives
- II. A special form of the latter: the creation of a Bolúmbó
- III. Friendship
- IV. Love between husband and wife]

Article I. Affection among Relatives

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The Nkundó feel a deep affection toward members of their kin group. I am of the opinion that they love them as much, if not more, than most Europeans, but are not capable of as great a devotion. To understand this condition, one need only consider that affection is instinctive. Our people say: botéma nd'ikoma, "the heart is like a package," that is to say, it does not choose the object of its love, but rather the object presents itself spontaneously. (1) Devotion on the

1. Or lolango ale nsembe éy'otéma, "love is an innate, spontaneous product of the heart."

152 other hand almost always involves reasoning and is founded on a high
602 morality based on religion. Furthermore, the questions (of property, inheritance, etc.) which so often divide relatives from each other do not exist among the Nkundó, whose patrimony is held in common. [25] Among them the members of a family need each other absolutely and constantly; they cannot sustain the struggle for existence unless they remain well united. A man isolated from his kin is a pariah, for in all matters of importance he must count on them for help, protection, and defense. Therefore he is, so to speak, forced to make common cause with the rest of the family and to keep his proper place within it.

This may help us to understand that among these people there are fewer reasons for a cooling of family affections and more reasons for maintaining good relations. But it would be wrong to attribute their love to some kind of egoistic calculation. Their affection is sincere and spontaneous. But the above facts explain why the dis-
[578] unity and quarrels which are so frequent in Europe are unknown among the Nkundó; they are settled at once and do not have time to become bitter or deeply rooted. A very rare exception does not invalidate this generalization.

1. Parents and children

593^x Parents sincerely love their children. Their affection is not lessened with age; there is only a somewhat greater tenderness toward the very young, whom they readily carry and fondle. The indulgence which they show for the faults of their offspring is tempered by anger when they are exasperated by misbehaviour, more often than by a rational concern for the child's training. The spouse who has not suffered from the child's error does not react against him but on the contrary is led by his affection to protect him. Parents insistently try to excuse and defend their children when they have misbehaved. (1)

1. It should be noted that the same thing may also frequently be done among many Europeans.

Nevertheless, the general good of the clan wins out over affection.

593^x receive more attention, will get his way more readily -- as among ourselves. These preferences do not give rise to jealousy among brothers as long as they remain within the limits of fairness, which they almost always do.

[586] Some rich men who have a dominant social rank have a means of expressing their preference for one of their daughters, a means which is a demonstration of their wealth and at the same time an assertion of their position. This practice will be described in the article that follows.

The children for their part sincerely love their parents. This love is composed more of respect for the father and of more tenderness for the mother, as is the case among Europeans. The same variants of sentiment, depending on whether the child is a boy or girl, are to be found among the Nkundó. The children may be remiss in their dutiful affection and respect, but these are exceptions due to thoughtlessness, stubbornness, or sudden anger. (1) Here one does

1. For an example see Chapter X, Article VIII.

● [152] not encounter the deep discord that among Europeans divides parents and children, nor the coarseness and brutality of which one reads quite often in our newspapers. Among the Nkundó these family dramas are unknown.

[155] Nevertheless, what we have said above does not exclude disobedience. The Nkundó child, too, prefers play to work and freedom to discipline. He tries to shun the commands of his parents which tie him down and keep him from frolicking with his companions. (2)

2. One of the first words learned by a Nkundó child is mbóí, "I don't want to."

Love for the mother is especially deep. No matter how old a Nkundó may be, his feelings of tenderness for her do not decrease; he always remains her child. Whenever he feels pain, disappointment, or sorrow, one word is on his lips: ngóya, "mother." Among these

593^x people the innate feeling which links mother and children retains all its original spontaneity. [28]

593^x Nkundó parents and children do not give each other any special external signs of affection, however, as do some other peoples.

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At death the sincerity of affection between parents and children is plainly visible. Their moving anguish comes to the surface noisily and often pathetically. Even older men are not ashamed to weep like children. What we have said is in no way altered by the fact that the light-heartedness of their character makes it easy for them to shift from one emotion to another. (Actually, the same thing may be noted in Europe.) (1)

1. See my article on the funeral customs of the Nkundó which is to appear in Anthropos.

2. Brothers and sisters

From the love that Nkundó children feel for their parents naturally springs their affection for their brothers and sisters, which is strong and sincere. Our remarks concerning the nature and qualities of the children's feeling toward their parents are applicable here. Such quarrels as occur seldom become bitter. On the one hand, the affection between brothers and sisters is deep and sincere, and on the other, their social and economic interdependence naturally reinforces the ties between them.

Mutual assistance is an outgrowth of their love; brothers and sisters often help each other.

After the death of his father and uncles, the eldest brother is the natural defender and protector of his younger brothers and his sisters, even though they may be married.

593^x A definite difference can be observed between the intensity of affection present among uterine brothers and sisters and the sentiments shared with others. The bonds between children of the same mother are much more intimate and their affection much greater than it is toward brothers and sisters who have different mothers. This too is entirely [29] in accordance with the universal qualities of human nature and shows that monogamy is superior to polygamy in bringing about the unity, harmony, and happiness of families.

593^x With reference to signs of affection, grief at the time of death,
etc., the observations made for parent-child relationships hold true
● 152 here -- mutatis mutandis.

3. Various relatives

602 The Nkundo's affection extends toward all members of his family, that is, all those with whom he feels linked by blood and common origin. These relatives are much greater in number than in Europe, because Nkundó kinship includes many more generations. The intensity of affection decreases with the distance of the degree of kinship. But the Nkundó knows and feels that he belongs to a large family, and he remains attached to all its members. He can find a home with any of them. This accounts for the fact that in the centers, men from the same village will look for each other and consider
[621] each other "brothers." Actually, that is what they are, since in general each village consists of only a single kin group.

Although here, as in the case of brothers and sisters, common interests play a part in maintaining bonds between family members, the feelings of affection are not based on selfish considerations. The latter only reinforce these feelings, which are truly innate among the Nkundó. Among the various relatives the strongest attachments are developed between grandparents and grandchildren, uncles and aunts and nephews and nieces, male cousins and female cousins, etc.

603 Among the Nkundó as among Europeans there is a very strong affection between grandparents and grandsons, even greater, one might say, than between parents and children (the expression is: bóna [30] l'onkáná, ndekf nd'ónkáná). But the relationship degenerates into compliance and weakness on one side, and into disrespectful carelessness on the other.

604 A Nkundó loves his paternal uncles and aunts and treats them like "fathers," and his maternal uncles and aunts like "mothers." Naturally, his feelings toward them are not as affectionate as for his parents, but they are an extension of these in an attenuated form.

605 The same situation holds true for the bonds which link him to his cousins, whom he calls "brothers" and "sisters." The children of his paternal aunt are his "fathers," however.

593^x against the presence of love are based chiefly on the instability of
581 unions, the high frequency of divorce, infidelity, and polygamy --
objections which we shall examine in somewhat greater detail.

593^x To judge the situation properly, we must first distinguish
582 between the sexes, which are not at all alike in this respect. Fur-
thermore, among women [42] we must distinguish between those
who are wives of polygamous men and those who are not.

Let us speak first of all of the men. They seem superior to
the opposite-sex in the matter of conjugal love, at least if we base
our conclusions on their greater fidelity. Divorce is almost always
[586] caused by the wife. As a matter of fact, this is quite natural. The
man marries at a fairly mature age and therefore becomes involved
when he is well aware of what he is doing, while the girl most often
becomes engaged before the age of discretion and is thus unable to
choose according to her own heart.

595^x On the other hand, the polygamous man's heart must be divided.
As we will see suo loco, he has a special love for one of his wives.
His love for the first one deepens, becomes more rational, more de-
liberate, whereas his love for his favorite would seem to be more
a matter of emotion in the strict sense of the word. As to the others,
he has usually chosen them of his own will and perhaps has even
seduced them to the point of making them leave a previous husband.
It would therefore seem unfair to deny the presence of some affection
toward them.

582 But is the term "love" still applicable? According to the
593^x European point of view, conjugal love is exclusive. Among the
Nkundó this does not seem to be the case. It has often been said
● 152 that the polygamist considers his wives, with one or two exceptions,
595^x as human capital, so many production machines. I would not deny
that the harem constitutes human capital and a source of wealth, but
in my opinion such a statement is much too extreme and absolute.
In most cases a real affection for his wives must be attributed to the
polygamist. I understand this affection to be a kind of love in
reduced proportions. And I compare this situation -- mutatis mutandis --
to that of someone who loves several friends at the same time. It is

583^x possible to speak of love toward several individuals in spite of differ-
 562 ences in its intensity, depending on the various persons who [43] are
 585^x its objects, although we may consider such a divided love as very
 152 imperfect. But whatever name one calls it and however weak in in-
 intensity one finds it, it is impossible to deny its existence.

595^x Among women, it is necessary to distinguish between wives
 152 of monogamous men and those of polygamists, especially in the case
 of "supplementary" wives. It is not hard to understand that among
 the latter, love is more likely to cool. Since the husband must divide
 his attentions and signs of affection, if only to preserve harmony,
 the situation could hardly be otherwise, even without the fact of very
 early marriages. In addition to the above-mentioned case of the
 cooling of affection among wives in polygamous marriages, there is
 no question that in these marriages, a community of souls, feelings,
 and interests is not established between wives and husbands to the
 same extent as in monogamous marriages. However, one could not
 state as a general rule that the wife of a polygamist does not love him,
 at least to some extent, depending on the individual. To maintain
 a priori that a man cannot be loved simultaneously by several women
 is logically inadmissible and contrary to the facts. Here it happens
 quite often that a wife leaves her polygamous husband for another be-
 cause she has transferred her love to the latter. It is for the excep-
 tions that proof should be required. Even if there are many of them,
 they do not invalidate the cases of real affection.

When a polygamist returns home after a long absence, he is
 often the object of affectionate demonstrations by his wives which are
 surprising to Europeans. The women fall at his feet, embrace his legs,
 roll on the ground, and perform contortions out of joy and emotion.
 It is true that the freedom resulting from colonization has done much
 to cool these fine sentiments.

Is it beside the point to quote the saying of [44] polygamists'
 [539] wives: bokungd škafola bitšé, lolango škafola botéma, "the bokungd
 tree divides its branches, love divides the heart"? And then there is
 the following fable which teaches true love: a polygamist who has
 three wives, is accidentally wounded and lies dying on the opposite
 side of the river. His wives run to the shore but find no canoe. The
 river is infested with crocodiles. The chief wives refuse to risk their

- 595^x lives by swimming across; it is the least important one who throws
 ● 152 herself in the midst of the dangers to go and help her husband.

In most cases a woman no longer feels affection for her husband when she has given her heart to a lover. She stays with him because it would be hard to do otherwise. Her husband continues to have the use of her body and her arms, but she no longer gives him a place in her heart. As this proverb so subtly expresses it:

- [539] bōm'akwēta, m̄bw'ā nkānge; bonšāmb'ākweṭa, omeka ē ŋteḡume,
 "the husband calls you, 'I am sick and may die'; the lover calls you, 'I will try to come.'"

595^x
 586 The objection concerning the frequency of divorce is difficult to handle because the question is very complicated. First of all, the fact that a couple remains together, that they remain faithful to one another, is no proof of love in a society where the idea of duty is very strong. A Christian woman may come to feel a real aversion for an unfaithful husband, yet she may remain with him out of a sense of duty, out of love for the children, etc. Conversely, in a society where the idea of duty is relaxed or does not exist spouses may readily be unfaithful to one another, although basically they love each other; if it is easy to divorce they will do so rashly, for trivial reasons, without realizing that there is still love between them. (1)

1. The Honorary Attorney General A. Sohier has informed me that the experiences of his long judiciary career entirely confirms my statements. Their truth is reflected in the fact that for some years now in European countries, it has been necessary to permit divorced couples to remarry each other. Thus we see that they find each other again after several years of separation.

The first of my two assertions is not to be found among the Nkundō, [45] since they have no moral concept of duty in our sense. But it sometimes happens that a couple who no longer love each other remain together because it is not possible for them to separate.

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548 Finally, let us not forget the spirit of gain and greed. Except in a few instances, a woman expects remuneration from a man to whom she has surrendered her body. Many infidelities may be explained by this practice, at least at the present time. But on the other hand, it should be noted that the woman's demand for a "wage" from her lover may be explained by an amorous concern; by giving the woman a gift or an amount of money the man shows [49] his regard for her; it is a demonstration of his affection for her, and the woman wants to be paid in order to be sure of her lover's love. That is not to say that such instances are common or frequent, but such a feeling is natural and actually exists in more than one case. (1)

1. See Chapter VI, Article VII, 2.

[599] It is not surprising that the woman who lives in circumstances which are always unfavorable to chastity and marital fidelity is easily led to adultery and often falls. That is the basis of the proverb: bómoto ndé lofolókó, nkó ngonda éfá'nd'ósengámé, "the woman is a chrysalis; there is no forest where she does not hang" -- a clear condemnation of the frivolity of the daughters of Eve in the land of the Nkundó. Nevertheless, these moral criticisms in the form of proverbs can be accepted only in a general way and must be understood cum grano salis; they leave the door wide open for exceptions.

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152 In his Blancs et Noirs au Congo Belge [Whites and Blacks in the Belgian Congo], (p. 38), Jačot has written: "The Bantu is capable of love . . . and that is all, and his wife -- no matter what has been said -- of a certain amount of marital fidelity. In general, neither the one nor the other go too far. Platonism, Petrarchism, and Romanticism are foreign to the love of the natives . . . I know . . . of cases of fierce jealousy and of beautiful faithfulness." (2)

2. See also ibid., p. 208 ff.

152 We conclude that love exists among the Nkundó. This feeling is subjected to harsh attacks and is affected by many unfavorable circumstances, which may account for its imperfection and for certain

152 anomalies in its manifestations. The objections raised against the idea of its existence among the Nkundó do not prove its absence; rather they indicate the adverse conditions under which it is found, conditions which prevent its development and bring about its shortcomings or destruction. [50]

Part 2

The Sexual Life of the Nkundó

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In this section we will examine successively:

- I. The feeling of sexual modesty.
- II. Preparation for sexual life.
- III. Prostitution.
- IV. Premarital sexuality.
- V. Sexual practice.
- VI. Unnatural vices.
- VII. Incest
- VIII. Love philtres.

Article I. Sexual Modesty

Sexual modesty is defined, at least by modern psychologists, more or less as a "a sensitive dynamism (or principle of action) of fear which is quasi-instinctive and directly related to sexual processes." (1)

1. J. De La Vaisière, S. J., La Pudeur instinctive [Instinctive Modesty], p. 13.

It is a good instinct rather than a virtue, and facilitates the practice of chastity. Understood in this sense, modesty tends to hide the sex act and anything that is closely or remotely connected with it.

Sensual excesses do not exclude the existence of modesty and, conversely, a modest person may allow himself to be led into a violation of morals. Nevertheless, the greater the development and

515 are reassured by the fact that they are in a group, so that no one feels
834 singled out by the gaze of the passer-by. Washing away from major
streams is always surrounded by more propriety. For this purpose a
[243] small enclosure (ikomba) is built behind the hut or among the banana
trees, or a small thicket is allowed to grow there. By this means
the native is sheltered from indiscreet glances if he wants to take a
[157] bath or give himself an enema. As a matter of fact these things are
done preferably after dark.

834 5) Violent anger or sorrow drown out modesty, just as they
152 momentarily destroy the use of reason and suppress all feelings which
are contradictory or simply different. In this situation, too, the man
shows himself superior to the woman. He is less impulsive, calmer,
less prone to lose control of his actions, to be carried away by his
anger. Thus he almost never strips himself bare. The woman, on
the other hand, readily strips off all her clothing. This behavior is
extremely common; a woman undresses completely whenever she
experiences great sorrow or intense anger. Luckily for propriety's
sake some friend or relative always hastens to cover at least the
essential parts. For a woman who throws off her clothing exposes
herself to the mockery and jeers of spectators. (1)

[593]^x
[578] 1. An angry woman may also undress to
shame her husband; it is a way of insult-
ing and mocking him.

833 6) The Nkundó practice sexual intercourse only at night. I
believe that this custom is due to their sense of propriety, [57] sup-
plemented by a superstitious explanation which will be described in
detail in Article V.

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834 7) The sense of modesty has its fullest expression in relation
to parents, brothers, sisters, etc. Thus it is unheard of that a son
should see his mother naked: bóna áténáká ésunvɛ nvangó. If an
adult daughter is ill and requires personal care (such as an enema,
for example), the father has to take care of her himself if no other
female relative is near by. But their sense of modesty is such that
they both shed tears over the event. As a matter of fact this situation

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832/ According to what I have been told, this type of ornament may also have a sexual significance. Normally -- and this statement is applicable only to the present time -- the beads are entirely covered by clothing and are visible only on a few occasions. If a large number of strings (as many as six, eight, or ten) or very many beads are worn, attention may be attracted to them because there will be a bulge in the clothing worn over them. Their sound will reveal their presence during a race or a dance. And according to my informants, that is enough to awaken passion. Making an allusion to the beads and especially touching them deliberately is considered as an invitation. For her part, a woman sometimes rubs them together in her fingers so that they will make their characteristic noise and thus attract a man's attention and arouse his interest.

The preceding does not mean that simply the wearing of the beads is necessarily intended for a bad purpose. Not only must such an intention be excluded in the case of serious persons, especially if they are elderly and content themselves with wearing a single string, seldom a second one to support the first. But there is also the possibility that a young Black beauty may adorn herself with ten or more strands out of sheer vanity, so that the whole world may see that she has so many. [70]

Furthermore, it has been shown that attention to appearance is not necessarily directed to another person. Though that may be generally true, many people like to dress for the pleasure of being well dressed, and girls who never dream of an adventure may still enjoy wearing pretty undergarments. This desire for adornment for its own sake can, no doubt, explain the belts, as well as other embellishments on more than one Nkundó woman.

We should add that those who adhere to the theory that the tattoos have an immediate sexual influence could apply such a theory here as well.

302 5. Depilation

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All Nkundó of both sexes practice depilation of the genital organs and even the armpits. The natives believe that the hair growing

583^x 184 a new element from the legal standpoint. This is clearly apparent in the repugnance with which these same Bombwanja who practice the form of exchange just described regard an exchange pure and simple, which will be described below.

The exchange of widows is also practiced by the Elinga. Like the Bombwanja, they also have the two forms of quasi-exchange described at the beginning of this article.

4) On the other hand, a true exchange of wives exists among the riverain peoples known as the Bodaya and the Longa (1); in their

1. They live near the mouth of the Salonga
(in the villages of Bonsela, Pomputa, Nkuse,
Bombomba, Isaka, etc.)

dialect it is called iengya. Two men exchange wives. If the bride price of one is greater than that of the other, the difference is refunded. Such an exchange is carried out with the consent of the women involved.

583^x 184 152 [837] Let us see how such an exchange usually comes about. Imagine two men, Bokula and Mpola, with their respective wives, Mbindo and Bafina. Suppose that Bokula falls in love with Bafina, the wife of Mpola, and the pair become involved in an adulterous relationship. There is a cooling of Bafina's love for her husband Mpola; she performs fewer and fewer services for him, etc. The same thing happens to Bokula's relationship with his wife Mbindo. The latter is jealous; her patience is soon at an end. She discusses the matter with Mpola, her rival's husband. "See how your wife deceives you; she no longer loves you. My husband is forsaking me [217] for her; he no longer loves me. This is a challenge to you as well as to me. If you are a man (1), pick up the challenge."

1. "Man" in the sense of vir (jwende); the meaning is: "If you have any courage, show that you are not a coward."

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152 According to the native view, a man must take this woman home for the sake of his honor. If he did not do so, he would become the butt of malicious comments and scorn on the part of all, both men and women. He would be considered a coward, just as in European "cultured" society a man is considered a coward if he does not pick up the glove thrown down by his adversary.

The rejected woman's hatred for her husband is transformed into a love for the man who has been similarly hurt by her rival. The joint misfortune of the pair creates a mutual feeling of affection. The woman is accepted as wife and is thus saved from dishonor. The man, on his part, feels affection for the woman who offers him her heart and preserves his good name. Harmony is at last established among all four of them, the two men arrange the matter of bride price in the way we have described, and then they live in peace without any enmity toward one another.

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184 This way of handling the situation is very strange to us, because it is indefensible from the point of view of a sound philosophy and of Catholic morality. But it seems normal to the natives. The pagan conscience has no trouble coming to terms with it, since no pagan law explicitly prohibits such behavior. Everyone comes to an agreement in the end, and that is all their conscience requires. Everything considered, there is no infraction of the rights of any individual, and since the native mentality is not concerned with morality as we conceive of it, this solution seems altogether natural to them.

Nevertheless, the ethnic groups who do not practice this true exchange in no way approve of it. Not that they fail to understand the psychology underlying this practice; on the contrary, if the situation arises they accept it. But they condemn [218] the legal procedure. They require that the two marriages be broken in the regular fashion and that two new marriages be contracted. That is, they demand the restitution and payment of the bride prices through the ndonga and through the respective parents of the women. For them therefore an exchange is not a true marriage, but a sort of sale and purchase. Also, from their point of view, the women who have been exchanged are slaves and not wives, because they live with their

Nkundu

Pygmies FO4

Batswa

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578 Since the impetuous youth did not want to observe the ancestral custom and considered his strength superior to the law, his action is not justifiable. We must admire among many of the old natives the innate feeling of justice and impartiality that makes them disapprove of and condemn their own children. Furthermore, if the passionate avenger of his honor does not change his ways and endeavor to combat the thoughtless violence of his temperament by replacing it with a sense of measure, his marriage will not last. And he will be the one [276] accused of having caused the break. The matter is clear; it is quite true that the woman started it. The husband therefore had all the trumps in his hand. Why, then, did he not use them? If he had followed the procedure required by law he would have gained his case all the way down the line.

The fact that a husband must first inform the ndonga and the family authorities does not mean that he has not the right to punish his wife in a violent fashion. This practice is observed to avoid excesses and abuses. The husband is not given the freedom to do as he pleases. Recourse to the representatives of family authority may be considered as a kind of delegation of their power.

These legal provisions of the Nkundó are truly wise. While they give an outraged husband the right to punish his wife and, therefore, to hold her in check, the law imposes a rein on the impetuosity of unthinking anger. Furthermore, by requiring that these matters be made public, they avoid interminable discussions and palavers on the subjects of fines to be paid, etc.

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● [152] In the past certain men were capable of becoming exasperated by the disgrace to the point where they were no longer able to master their rage. Women were killed for this reason. The Nkundó say that a man would not let himself be carried to this extreme unless driven to it by the great love he bore his wife. This comment has a psychological validity. Nevertheless, such an action was not praised and could even produce a war.

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674 It sometimes happened that an enraged man who wanted to kill his wife under such circumstances was prevented from doing so because he had to abstain from assassination to maintain the efficacy (nsímbo) of a practice (borté) in his possession. He therefore had

C. Against a husband and his accomplice. There is no
 684 specific sanction in Nkundó law against a husband's adultery, [323]
 but an outraged wife may take revenge on him, as on her rival.
 Her weapons against her husband include invective, the refusal of
 food, drink, baths, and finally of debitum conjugale. These are
 appreciable punishments about which the husband can in no way
 complain, for he would be found entirely in the wrong. The woman's
 actions stem from a legitimate jealousy. Sometimes her feeling
 [834] becomes so intense that she tears off her clothing and stands before
 her husband completely naked; this shames him greatly and con-
 stitutes a stinging reproach. Invectives flow out of the wife's mouth
 in torrents: ilolé ing., itutula ing., inyanyama ine, owa lóí ô ndá
 [57] nyongo, ndá ntémbé, "that imbecile, that good for nothing, that
 beast, one day you'll die of penalties, of being caught in flagrante
delicto" Then there is a whole string of the usual in-
 [62] sults. Our Nkundó say that the more abundant the insults, the greater
 is the woman's love. She may carry on like this for days, even for
 weeks. Her responses to her husband's adultery are thus of the same
 sort as those she makes use of under other circumstances.

If a jealous wife sets fire to the hut in which her husband
 yielded to his passion, no one can reproach her. The damage
 was caused on her husband's account.

Against the woman accomplice, the wife may use more
 violent means. She may fight her, strike her, even injure her.
 The rival's husband will demand a liombo, or payment "for blows
 and wounds," which has to be paid not by the wife's family, but
 by the guilty husband. Thus in the final analysis it is again he who
 is punished. If the offending woman is killed, it is again the un-
 faithful husband who is obliged to pay an indemnity to the widower.
 (See Article II.)

One form of punishment to which a wife likes to have re-
 course to take revenge on her adulterous husband and his accomplice
 if she catches them in the act is to pour a pot of hot or boiling water
 on their bodies. [324]

626 The shame attached to the discovery of this sort of miscon-
837 duct in the better circles in Europe is unknown among the Nkundö.
This is natural since isolated instances are readily excused. As to
● [52] the habitual offenders, they are sensitive [326] to the above-men-
tioned epithets but will not correct their ways on this account any
more than people in other parts of the world.

937 An adulterous husband is criticized as much as an adulterous
826 wife in spite of the difference in the means of repression which
684 Nkundö law provides for their respective misconduct.

Public opinion therefore corroborates the conclusion toward
which our examination of sanctions has pointed, namely that adultery
is condemned by the Nkundö. Opinion is not based on the existence
of the sanction but seems to spring from their innate mentality, which
makes them perceive adultery as a disorder.

6. Aggravating circumstances

837 If a case of adultery is followed by conception, it becomes
842 especially serious, and for the husband as much as for the natural
672 father. Indeed the latter must assume all the consequences. When
circumstances permit the husband makes his wife denounce her ac-
complice, and she does not refuse to do so. The husband then calls
a meeting and demands a pledge (ndanga) from the culprit, who in
that way acknowledges that he is at fault and shows his willingness
to assume all responsibility. If there is a miscarriage or the child
dies during delivery, the natural father must pay the legal father
an indemnity of "a slave" or more (sometimes 50 rings); a smaller
indemnity is required for a child who is only deformed or sickly. If
the mother dies the indemnity consists of a slave and 50 rings, and it
may go as high as 100 rings.

In the interim the husband no longer goes near his wife. He
leaves her to her lover, who must "preserve the foetus" and observe
all the rites and practices associated with pregnancy and childbirth,
since, physically, he is the father. (1) [327]

1. For fuller details see Chapter X,
Article II, 3. For analogous practices

595^x She does no work in the farm or kitchen. She always has an ebisa to wait on her. If her family has no member they can let her have, she will borrow an ebisa from a distant relative or a friend.

[412] A nkondé does not travel on foot; she is carried in a hammock (hunting net). Her husband accompanies her on foot, however. But [526] this was done only for a true nkondé of a rich man, and the custom is disappearing today.

A favorite may not leave her husband, even to go and see her parents. In the past some men were so jealous of their favorites [514] that they would not allow them to satisfy even their most private needs unless they themselves or some sentinel (usually a Rotswá) stood watch. A man could not even go into the vicinity of her hut, which is built just behind the husband's shed. For although the husband is sometimes tolerant of the passions of his other wives, he always shows [122] an intransigent jealousy [346] in relation to his favorite. He never travels without having her accompany him.

The favorite has the honor of performing small personal services [515] for her husband; she cuts his hair, helps him in the removal of body hair, scratches his pustules from ringworm or prickly heat, anoints him with oil, paints him with ngóla, and, in a word, performs all the tasks connected with his appearance and hygiene.

595^x
766 Out of love for his favorite, her husband can buy her corpse for the price of a slave (in kind or in money). By doing so he obtains the right to have it buried beside his own while those of the other wives must be buried with their native clans. That is why in some regions a husband calls his favorite his ikundaka (from kunda "to bury"). Nevertheless, if her husband dies before she does, his heirs may not trouble themselves about his wishes and no longer require that the favorite be buried in their cemetery. That is what happened to Bongóla of Bongíli, whose husband Ikilinganya of Bongangá (Boéndé) had paid the price of two slaves for this right. When the husband has [224] killed large game, the favorite, like the bomátsa, has the right to receive her personal predetermined portion (boando). Her part is the neck or a chop, which in her absence, goes to the sons or their wives. The other wives do not have the same right; each one obtains only an ordinary piece (liondo).

Article VII. Monogamy

595^x
522 The Nkundó do not esteem monogamy. It is polygamy that they desire. If a man has only one wife, that is because he is poor. Thus he is made fun of and called etula or bololé, "a nobody," or bosé, "a weak man." Songs dealing with this theme [533] can often be heard during drinking parties, especially among the Elinga. All this is a great obstacle in the struggle against polygamy. Not only is the Nkundó tempted by the material advantages of polygamy, but he is unable to bear teasing. He is extremely sensitive to humiliation and is the slave to other men's respect.

595^x In spite of all this, and apart from the influence of the Christian religion, monogamous marriages that were not simply imposed by necessity but were spontaneously desired, have existed in the past and still exist, although they are extremely rare. Here are the names of a few men who wished to remain united to one woman, although they had the means to establish a harem for themselves. I have chosen them at random from two villages: Bonjoku-Bonkoso (27 taxpayers in 1931) and Bongili wá Ndongó together with the affinally related clan Ilekó (47 taxpayers in 1931).

Bonjoku-Bonkoso:

Esalé éá Ekutu of Bokenyola married to Iombe of Nkélengo;

Bokató of Bokenyola married to Wanga of Likolí;

Bofanga w'ófongé of Bokenyola married to Baléngola;

Itéd yá Lokékola of Bofétola married to Nkúni of Bongale.

All died before 1895.

Bongili:

Nsenge (still alive) married to Toyôngwa of Elángá. Even when he was widowed, he did not want to remarry, because of his attachment to his deceased wife.

Efoloko éá Bonkóngyá married to Bambála of Bosíá;

Bongelé married to Bakúki of Bompángá;

Boldimbe w'embengá married to Bokele of Ekíla;

Lofalanga of Ilekó married to Imote of Besombó. After his wife's death, he remained a widower until he himself died.

Chapter IX

Death

152 Since the subject of our study is only Nkundó marriage, we
593^x will examine matters relating to death only from this limited stand-
761 point. As to the general aspects of the question, the reader will
find them in our article on the funeral customs of the Nkundó,
about to be published in Anthropos.

Article I. Sorrow and Mourning

In the study cited above, a word was said concerning the varying degrees of intensity that may be reached in the sorrow caused by the death of a cherished being.

Of course the suffering does not always exclude a mixture of egoistic elements, such as regret of the financial loss involved in the death of a wife and the obligation of continence and various other prohibitions of widowhood. This is rather natural and does not merit discussion. On the other hand, it would be unjust and contrary to the truth to attribute all the sadness to those base feelings. In general, this sorrow must also be taken as evidence of a true love which is often its primary cause. Exceptions do occur, however, for instance in the case of an old woman who has been inherited by a polygamist.

When we compare the various manifestations of sorrow at the death of a spouse with those observed at the death of a relative, we note certain practices specific to the former case. One might say that at the death of a spouse, the signs of sorrow reach a culminating point [418], as if native law wished to underline the predominance of the relationship created by marriage over the bonds of kinship and thus manifest its agreement with divine law.

Nevertheless it is clear that practice does not always correspond to theory, here any more than elsewhere. We should not be astonished in not finding among the natives a perfect and ideal love

152 free of all egoism. When even among peoples universally recog-
761 nized as superior, self-pity during the pain felt on the death of
593 someone beloved is neither rare nor reprehensible, can we be
shocked that our natives experience similar regrets? Do we con-
demn a young widow who, although sincerely and intensely re-
gretting the husband she loved tenderly and whom death has just
removed from her affection, thinks at the same time of the un-
happy situation in which she and her small children find them-
selves as a result? And is not the reasonable hope of finding some-
one who will take care of her and the orphans an effective and
legitimate consolation that will help her to endure the trial?

All things considered, it is therefore not at all surprising
that our Blacks react that way. And it is quite natural that, in
practice, they should suffer more from the death of a father and
especially a mother or a child than from the loss of a husband or
wife. The situation here is entirely different from that in Europe.
And the system of polygamy, with all its consequences, is not
exactly discouraging to egoism and favorable to an ascension toward
the ideal of a more sublime love.

Therefore we should not be surprised that a wife at the
death of her husband laments: ngóy'óm'ókámí óye! ("Mother, my
husband, ah!"); but at the death of a child or a mother or father
she wails: ngóya njólélengana óye! ("Mother, I am bereft, ah!"),
thus expressing a more intense sorrow. For a father or a mother
cannot be replaced, but she will always find someone who will
want to marry her. As to a child, between it and its parents
there is more of a life in common [419] than between spouses
under the system of polygamy. More marks of tenderness are also
exchanged between mother and child than between native couples.

764 Immediately after his wife's death, a husband is surrounded
152 by all the women of the village who come and mistreat him. They
593 vie with each other in smearing him with charcoal smut, soil, and
mud, and in rubbing him with the plant called linsánsá, which
causes a stinging rash comparable to that caused by nettles in
Europe. There are no relatives among the women who engage in this

152 rough behavior, only strangers married to village men (those known
593 as bāajāāla). This ill treatment is often extended to close rela-
764 tives of the widower, that is, to those whom the women in ques-
tion call bāome, "potential husbands," never to fathers and higher
relatives. (1) The purpose of this practice seems to be to intensify,

1. See Chapter V, Article IV, 1, no. 3,
and Chapter VI, Article VI.

by physical pain, the sorrow caused by death. In addition,
provocatively obscene words, gestures, and movements remind
the widower that from then on he must be continent, as described
in extenso in the study cited above.

765 Afterwards, relatives dress the widower in a lisāki, a
banana leaf which is torn all over horizontally. For all other
mourning garments, as well as for all regulations and prohibitions
that apply to all cases, see the detailed study.

The ill treatment described is not inflicted on the widow.
It is meted out exclusively to men.

[587] The general rules pertaining to seclusion apply to a widower;
in fact they are especially severe for a man. His kinswomen pre-
pare his simple meals. However, if his relations with his father-
in-law were excellent, the latter sends a woman [420] to him
who will attend to his needs. She often becomes his wife when,
after the lifting of mourning, he brings the ibōleoko (Chapter III,
Article IV).

During the entire first period of seclusion, he cannot go
anywhere, at least ostensibly. If he needs to go out, he must
go through the back. If he wants to visit a relative or friend, he
must go behind the huts, in the banana grove, even if it is evening.
In any case, he may not leave the village. Such was the ancient
law, though nowadays it is observed less and less.

Furthermore, he cannot have the slightest contact with any
woman who is not a relative. He cannot even shake her hand,
greet her out loud, or look at her even in passing.

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● 152
[584] When the family of the deceased bars the route to the funeral procession, they are manifesting the anger provoked by the death of one of their members. [428] For they feel anger and resentment, in spite of the fact that the ndonga carries a spear at the head of the procession as a sign that they come as friends, without evil intentions.

This does not mean that the natives attribute the cause of death to the husband and his family. In most cases they are convinced that the latter could not prevent it. Although they express themselves in those terms: lôotoomela bôna (nkâna, éoto), "you have killed our child (sister, relative)," they do not maintain that the husband's clan has really killed her, but only that she died among them. Under the circumstances do they feign anger to obtain valuables, for example? I do not think so. The Nkundô do not say that they simulate anger; they categorically state that they feel it and that they want to show it in the manner described. We should not be astonished at this since -- as we have noted in the study on the funeral customs of the Nkundô (Les Coutumes funéraires des Nkundô), the emotions of anger and sorrow seem to be intimately related among these peoples.

764 When the funeral procession passes through the last barrier, that which bars the entrance to the village, the husband's clan puts down the body, and it is subsequently lifted up by the family of the deceased, who carry it into the house of the head of the family. They are followed by the ndonga, the bânambôtswâ, the husband, and his relatives. The family of the deceased wall over her. Her kinswomen (biûnanyi) show their sorrow-anger by mistreating the clan wives (baâjââla), by smearing their bodies with mud, dressing them in basâki, and hitting them with stinging plants (bansânsâ). For the deceased is the baâjââla's "husband," that is, a kinswoman of their husbands. The baâjââla treat the widower and his relatives in the same way, because "their husband" has died among them.

The corpse is thus deposited in the hut of the head of the family. Each time that kinswomen who are married elsewhere arrive [429] to mourn over the deceased, the baâjââla forbid them

892 upon them; their upbringing costs them nothing, whereas among
855 Whites the maintenance, dress, food, instruction, and occupational
placement involve considerable expenses. It cannot be [465]
denied that while the modern European is exacting from all these
viewpoints, enchained and blocked by an ever growing multitude of
needs, the material life of the native is simple and his necessities
are reduced to an indispensable minimum. Nevertheless, it can
hardly be said that it is as easy for him to raise a large family with
many children as it is to have the responsibility of a smaller num-
ber. Without speaking of clothing -- especially at the present
time -- there is the food for growing children, which forces him
to clear a greater expanse of forest and to work harder at the various
ways of fishing and hunting; and when the time comes for the sons to
find wives, he is the one who must arrange to procure the valuables
needed for a bride price.

For their part, Nkundó women like to transmit life as much as
the men, if not more so. Pregnancy may make them disagreeable
and grumpy and sometimes cause them pain, but they put up with it
and, as a very general rule, do not think of depriving themselves
on that account of the happiness of giving birth to a cute little
creature, of nursing it, of carrying it in their arms or on their
shoulders. The difficulties and pains of maternity do not repel them.
Although later, during the payment of her daughter's bride price,
a Nkundó woman's greed will lead her to loudly claim the payment
due her and even sometimes destroy her child's love because of de-
laying this financial operation, the delay does not come to their
minds until the time comes.

In short, the Nkundó woman feels a perfectly natural, ma-
ternal love for her child.

842 There are of course exceptions to this general rule. And
855 the contrary would be astonishing for a pagan population who give
● 152 free rein to all their passions or, at least, restrain them only very
[466] slightly, and whose love is far from the perfection one may
find among a people ennobled by fifteen centuries of Christianity.
Moreover -- as all the preceding pages testify -- our Nkundó are
not fashioned from a uniform mold notwithstanding the impression
given by certain colonial and ethnological works. All the individual

842 differences can be found here, although they are less apparent to
855 a European observer since we usually approach the natives as a
●/52 group and our contact with them is often too impersonal.

2. Abortion

847 A great enemy of maternal love is the practice of abortion,
which has always been known to the Nkundó. Here we cannot
describe all the prescriptions used for that purpose. It will be suf-
ficient to enumerate the reasons for which they have recourse to
this practice. They are as follows:

1) A woman's lasciviousness; the procreation and subsequent
care of a child to some extent prevent the indulging in carnal
[178] pleasures. Formerly this cause of abortion was nonexistent or very
rare. Needless to say, it has become more common, especially
in the centers where it is constantly on the increase and where, in
addition, occasional or regular "housekeepers" learn new means of
sterilization and abortion.

2) A woman's antipathy or persistent anger toward her hus-
band may encourage her to prevent conception or destroy its effect.

3) An excessive weakening of the mother's organism caused
by a large number of conceptions and childbirths at too short inter-
vals.

4) The encumbrance and the difficulty of watching, carrying,
and taking care of many small children -- bálota bókghesano [467]
[535] wá bína nátfíá nátfíá. This reason is especially important for
well-known dancers.

It goes without saying that several of these motives may be
combined in the same person. For instance, I knew of a woman
who aborted at the time of her eighth child. Her recurrent preg-
nancies, together with continuous work, had greatly reduced her
strength. A palaver with her husband was the last straw; she de-
cided to get rid of the fruit she carried in her body.

Outside of these exceptions the natives of this country
ardently desire their own continuation through a large number of
progeny. (1)

[184]

1. The same is not true elsewhere. Examples
to that effect are cited from regions that are

THE NKUMU OF THE TUMBA

74⁴⁶ crypt would then be barred by mats in order to leave it as a hollow chamber, and
76a the hole leading down to it filled in with earth.

74 For a month or two after the burial the festivities and orgies continued. Women
76 would be hanged to create some diversion, but those hanged were not eaten. Decapi-
76a tations would continue. According to the informants only slaves brought in from
76a a distance would have to be tied to prevent their escape. The slave members of the
87 household of the dead *nkumu* would await their turn stoically, content to die that
[52] they might accompany their master in his journey to the land of spirits. This may
be true but scarcely seems possible. Still another diversion in the funeral orgies
was killing in the manner known as *nkumu*. If some man who had a slave did not
wish him to be hanged or beheaded, he might give him for this other method. As the
weeks slipped by, such a one, his life having apparently been spared, would suppose
that all was safe and that there was little chance of his being taken, and, thus
emboldened, would, instead of keeping at a safe distance, join the crowd to watch a
beheading. His death would be prearranged. At the moment of beheading a victim,
someone would drive a spear into the unsuspecting man, the whole crowd then
using spears and knives to stab and slash until he fell. Some might be tortured to
death by being buried up to the neck and left thus exposed to the hot sun without
food or water until death intervened, but this was not a common practice at such
funerals.

78 The termination of the dead *nkumu*'s affairs took place when the division of the
inheritance was made, a long and complicated process.

78 Such were the old days before European penetration. The advent of the white
64 man half a century ago was the beginning of the end. The ceremonies had to be
64 given up, though reluctantly. Occasionally now goats are beheaded in place of
human victims, and many of the younger generation find that, even so, the sight is
more than they can endure, and they seek refuge elsewhere. *Nkumu* are not anxious
for the honours. They find little or no respect paid to them by the government
officials and this is a distinct obstacle to their obtaining honour from their own
people. When the *nkumu* resident in the village adjacent to the mission station died,
one of the Natives was asked who would be next. The reply was that probably no
one would appear as a successor. Asked why, he answered, 'There are too many
trousers.' He meant that too many were adopting the ways of the white man to
[613] make the inauguration of another *nkumu* a success. In his one useful function, that
of judge, the paramount chief now takes his place, cases tried must be recorded by a
clerk of the court, and fines paid into the treasury of the chieftaincy. With such a
state of affairs the old ways drop into desuetude, and the younger generation grow
up knowing less of the ways of their fathers as the years pass.